

**King County Solid Waste Division
1999 Summary Report
Business Programs**

I. Introduction

This report describes the waste prevention and recycling services provided to King County businesses through the Business Assistance Program (King County Solid Waste Division, Waste Reduction and Recycling Section) in 1999. There are two changes to this report. In the past, the report has focused on efforts of the Green Works technical assistance and recognition program and highlighted a couple of new projects. This year, we include a description of most business programs offered by King County Solid Waste Division's Business Assistance Team (BAT) to provide a more complete picture of our services.

Last year, we included a large number of hard copy attachments. In an effort to save paper, we will refer the reader to the appropriate area of the web site for publications and other educational materials. All materials are available in hard copy upon request. If you would like a hard copy of any of the materials, please email Alexandra.Scott@metrokc.gov or call at 206-296-8454.

All other publications and promotional products are available from the web site at http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/bizprog/rec_assist/pubs1.htm or can be accessed through the home page at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/greenworks> (click on Recycling Assistance/guides). Access to the new Recycling and Reuse Database, which allows for online searches is available from the home page or from http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/bizprog/rec_assist/guides.htm.

II. Business Programs: Services Offered

The Business Assistance Team helps businesses by: 1) identifying ways to prevent waste through phone assists, onsite visits, roundtables, web pages and newsletters; 2) offering reuse and recycling information through online databases, phone assists, and specific industry or material specific programs; and 3) running the Green Works and Construction Works Recognition Program.

The Business Program offers the following core technical assistance and education programs.

Phone Assistance and Reuse and Recycling Database: In 1999, the Green Works team provided 614 phone assists to King County businesses. In June 1999, Green Works launched the Recycling and Reuse Database to answer recycling questions more quickly and more accurately. The database contains 3000 listings for reusing or recycling over 80 different types of materials. Since November 1999, the database has been available on the web for public access at http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/bizprog/rec_assist/guides.htm. In 1999, 15 businesses were assisted via the Internet or by the greenworks.swd@metrokc.gov email address.

Green Works Tracking Database: BAT staff tracks assistance to businesses in the Green Works Database.. Information entered into the database includes where the business heard about our services, the date of the interaction, the type of assistance provided, and information about all our Green Works members. During 1999, BAT staff improved the content by updating the mailing list of King County businesses.

Web site In November 1999, the Business team unveiled the new Business Pages, that can be viewed at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/greenworks>. The new Web site has much more information on it than before and provides access to case studies, newsletters, guides, lists of Green Works and Construction Works members, waste prevention information and much more. The web site has doubled the number of hits that it has received from 500 in June 1999 to about 1000 in December 1999.

The Business Assistance Team promotes two Recognition programs:

Green Works

By the end of 1999, 540 King County businesses became Green Works members, including 100 new members that joined in 1999. All members received the following publicity: radio advertisements on all of the following radio stations (KIRO, KMTT, KOMO, KWRM, KPLU, KVI, KSBG), a listing in King County's *Recycling Works* newsletter and in Seattle's *Recycler*, a listing in the annual Green Business Directory distributed to 25,000 businesses, and a listing on the Green Works Web Page. All Distinguished members received publicity via print advertisements in local and regional publications.

Construction Works

By the end of 1999, 15 businesses had joined Construction Works. The efforts of the businesses resulted in \$1,044,804 of cost savings and over 52,000 tons diverted from the landfill.

The Business Assistance Team works on specific projects:

Computer Recovery Project

During 1999, Green Works staff developed the concept and plan for the Computer Recovery Project, which involves a group of government agencies, non-profit organizations and computer recycling/reprocessing companies that have joined together to create alternatives to landfilling computer equipment. In April/May 2000, businesses and residents in King County will have the opportunity to donate their used computer equipment to be repaired, reused and recycled. More information can be located on our website at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/crp.htm>.

Medical Industry Waste Prevention Roundtable (MIRT)

The Medical Industry Waste Prevention Roundtable brings together professionals in the medical industry who are interested in exchanging ideas on, and working to develop new ways of, preventing and reducing waste. This group met seven times during 1999 and participates in an electronic listserv. The group draws attendance from area hospitals and other medical industry support professions. Summaries of the past five meetings can be found at http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/bizprog/waste_pre/medical.htm

Packaging Waste Prevention Assistance

Launched in July 1997, this program helps businesses eliminate or reduce their incoming and outgoing packaging waste. In 1999, 51 businesses either were contacted by the consultants or called to request information or assistance. Of these, 32 were interested in – and received -- assistance, including on-site consultations, written recommendations, materials relevant to each business, and referrals to appropriate packaging specialists or vendors.

In mid-1999, in partnership with the Seattle Public Utilities and Region X EPA, King County started the "Product Stewardship Demonstration Project" targeting the retail apparel and grocery industries. The project is intended to involve everyone in the supply chain, including manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers, in reducing the impacts of products and packaging. By the end of 1999, research was completed on potential product stewardship projects in the apparel and grocery sectors, and Seattle area apparel and grocery stores were invited to participate in a demonstration project. Work on this project will continue throughout 2000.

Computer Packaging Focus Group

Members from the Green Works staff and the Business and Industry Recycling Venture (City of Seattle) met several times to discuss alternatives to traditional computer packaging. The project culminated in a meeting between representatives of Boeing, Seafirst Bank and Group Health Cooperative and representatives from Dell, Sony and Compaq to discuss what alternatives are available and to provide the computer industry with feedback of what large consumers of computers want. The meetings were important for all parties because they succeeded in getting computer companies to hear directly from a few major Northwest companies about how to improve their packaging.

Business Junk Mail Reduction Project

The Business Junk Mail Reduction Project was launched by BAT staff as part of the National Waste Prevention Coalition. The web-based project can be reviewed at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/nwpc/bizjunkmail.htm>.

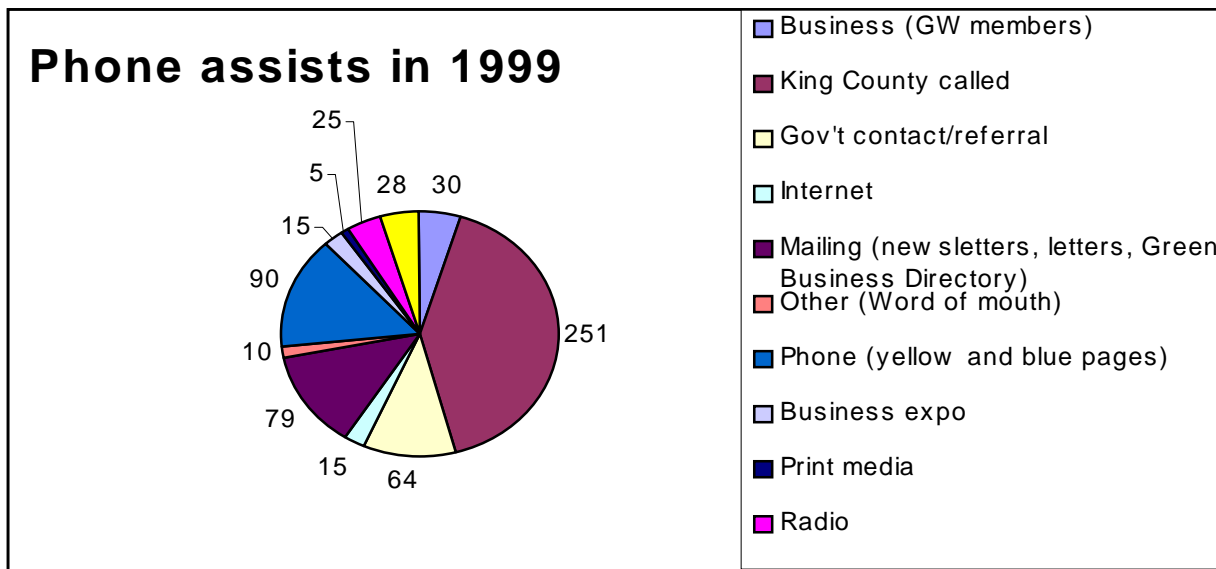
III. Awards

The Green Business Directory (the annual Directory of Green Works and EnviroStars members) was awarded the Achievement Award in Civic Education and Public Information by the National Association of Counties (NACO).

IV. Publicity

Every year, King County BAT staff tracks how businesses heard about our programs. The data that is collected is mostly from assistance provided over the phone or on the internet about general recycling issues and about the Green Works recognition program. The numbers below include assistance provided by the packaging waste reduction program and Construction Works.

The graph below shows in detail how businesses hear about BAT programs. In 1999, BAT recorded 614 phone assists. A quick overview of the table shows that the King County BAT staff calls business a large percentage of the time. Following that, people find out about Green Works and related programs by finding the hotline number in the phone book, through referrals, and mailings. Starting in 1999 we began tracking how many businesses contacted us from the website and we expect this number to increase in 2000.



V. Conclusion

The Green Works program assists businesses to conserve resources through waste prevention, recycling, and recycled product procurement. Assistance is tailored to each business and personal follow-up is provided. Recognition for Green Works members provides an incentive for businesses to improve and expand their waste reduction practices. Through phone assistance, on-site consultations, corporate-wide assistance, recognition, and special projects, both small and large businesses receive the information and hands-on help they need to save resources.